



**Animal Care & Control  
Advisory Board  
March 3, 2014**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Sandra McNeal, Phil Ruce, Tracy Schubert, Deb Morgan, Mike O'Dell, Robin Nielson, Patti Anderson, Anne Hendrickson, Maureen Haggerty, Nancy Driver, Shannon McKenzie, Dan Niziolek and Jeanette Wiedemeier Bower

Absent: Cindy Johnson

Guests: Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Director of Regulatory Services  
Council Member Andrew Johnson (Ward 12) conferenced into the meeting between 4:00 and 4:30pm

Jeanette called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and asked the group to do a roundtable of introductions for Nuria's benefit.

**New Business**

**1. Reports from Committees**

**a. Animal Care & Socialization – Shannon, Nancy, Anne H and Patti**

Anne reviewed a bit of the work the committee accomplished over the last few months. They had worked to review the adoption folder, at Jeanette's request. Members discussed information that should be included in the folder (dog and cat articles), as well as the new adoption application.

Patti mentioned that the group is interested in providing resources to the adoption folder, particularly on the dog training resources in Minneapolis. We don't want to "recommend" any resources, but merely list them for the customer's benefit. Nuria mentioned that it would be possible to map the resources on the website, as long as the City of Minneapolis doesn't endorse the businesses.

b. **Community Building & Revenue Enhancement Committee** – Sandra, Tracy, Deb and Robin

Sandra gave an update on the committee's meeting related to MACC getting its own Facebook page. The group met on a Saturday and created the page in an "unpublished" status. Both Jeanette and an employee in the Communication Department will be managing editors. Interested board members can ask to be content managers.

Several of the board members expressed interest in helping to post to the Facebook page. Maureen asked for specific guiding principles, which will help the board feel more confident in representing MACC appropriately to the public. Tracy asked for any crisis management tools from MACC; perhaps a fact sheet so we can all be on the same page when delicate topics are brought up on the page. Patti emphasized that she didn't want it to turn into a free-for-all; we need to have a consistent answer. Patti also recommended not turning it into a behavior helpline type of site.

Individuals interested in making a weekly post include: Sandra, Robin, Anne, Shannon, Mike, Tracy, and Maureen.

When asked for input on "hot button" topics, Shannon mentioned euthanasia, policy changes, and any attacks from other groups when they target MACC. Deb mentioned the drama on the previous page involved "this dog is going to die if you don't take it." We all agree that we are not interested in moving in this direction.

The board agreed that the purpose of the page was to reach new people through social media, advertise for new volunteers, invite people to fundraising events, engage donors, and other positive adoption stories. In general, we want to tell the good stories coming out of MACC.

Jeanette noted that talking points will be sent out from MACC staff to the volunteers helping administer the page, in hopes of keeping everyone on the same page.

c. **Responsible Pet Ownership** – Maureen, Mike, Cindy and Phil

No report.

## New Business

### 2. MACC Updates

- a. **MNCAPA Bill** – Jeanette asked Dan to talk about a bill that came at the Capitol a few years ago and resurfaced last week. Animal Ark is a strong proponent on it; AHS is a strong opponent. MACC opposed the bill in 2011 and signed onto AHS' petition against the bill again this year.

A hearing was held in the House of Representatives on Thursday (February 27, 2014). Overall, the bill includes language to the effect that:

- i. Shelters must double up the kennels (2 dogs or cats in the same kennel);
- ii. Shelters must send out a notice to all rescues before euthanizing animals;
- iii. Shelters Directors would have to sign off on every single humane euthanasia;
- iv. As long as a rescue had a 501c3 status, MACC would have to accept that rescue as a partner; no further background check or interviewing would be required;
- v. Dangerous dogs provisions weren't very clear, but the dog would have to be adjudicated by the courts (which is a substantial divergence from current policy); dogs would be adjudicated as vicious (but the term "vicious" is not determined in State Statute); all dogs would have to go through the courts, which would be a huge burden to the current judicial system;
- vi. The bill created extensive demands on resources (i.e., unfunded mandates);
- vii. The bill provided NO consideration of disease prevention; when two dogs are placed in the same kennel and dogs are held for indefinite periods of time, the increased risk of the spread of disease is significant.

Unfunded mandates take away MACC's ability to provide public safety. The bill language didn't fully take into consideration the disease prevention. This bill is derived from national template boilerplate language whereby the author simply removes STATE and adds Minnesota to it. It was not developed by Minnesota shelters or animal rescue groups; it was part of the No-Kill Nation agenda.

Nuria listened to the tape of the meeting and commented that Rep. Benson spoke that he was disenchanted with the process; the bill is tabled for now and will likely not be heard again during this session.

b. **Dog Run Update –**

Jeanette gave an update of where MACC is with the new initiative to build two additional dog runs adjacent to the animal shelter. During the winter donor appeal, more than \$10,000 was raised from donations from the community, and additional dollars were raised from MACC volunteers and our friends at Coloplast Corporation. Jeanette is now working collaboratively with the architects on the details of the project.

There was some discussion of the artificial turf that will be used in the dog run. Two great questions came up from board members:

1. How do you deal with it in the winter months in the snow?
2. Can you shovel the turf?

Jeanette will take both questions to the company for more information.

Construction will begin later in 2014, but definitely after the ice thaws. MACC plans to have a ribbon cutting ceremony upon completion.

c. **Animal Adoption Initiative –**

Jeanette described the new initiative to adopt all animals to the general public. She mentioned that a total of 17 focus groups were held during this process of engaging the public. See attachment. It has been a truly interesting process reaching out to different subsections of the stakeholders and interested parties involved in animal adoptions in Minneapolis.

There are five internal staff committees working on this initiative, and Jeanette is the Project Manager for the work:

Leadership Team – Responsible for the initial visioning of the Project Charter; developing training manuals, as well as policies and procedures

Adoption Team – Working on the new procedures of adopting animals to the public; developing a new adoption application; two new animal profiles (one for canines; one for felines); and an animal surrender form. The team is also responsible for visioning how to use volunteers as Adoption Counselors in the lobby to help customers make good decisions about selecting the right pet.

Intake Team – The team mapped out the current journey of an animal through the shelter and has been making recommendations for finding efficiencies.

Behavioral Evaluation (BE) Team – This team is looking at the different national BEs used at other shelters and has decided which modified test will be used at MACC. We will be doing a BE on every canine upon intake to determine the dog's risk for biting.

Metrics Team – This team is looking at data entry and developing automated reports to more easily move animals through the shelter.

MACC has recently finished up the community engagement portion of our work, and is now moving forward on making internal recommendations for new policies and procedures. We hope to circle back to everyone who participated in the focus groups in April into May 2014 to report back on where we landed with the project.

The initiative will launch in 2014.

d. **Council Member Johnson's Discussion**

The group talked about the email that was sent to the MACC Advisory Board regarding having the appointment of MACC Advisory Board members done by the city council. When Andrew didn't arrive at MACC, Dan was able to call Andrew and conference calling him into the meeting at 4:00pm. Council Member Johnson wants the MACC Board appointed by the council and the mayor. He raised the importance of the work the MACC Advisory Board is doing, but wants conformity with other boards (appointed by the council and the mayor). If this goes through, it will go through at the end of your terms (Summer 2015). Often times, the board positions are recommended by the individual city agency.

Board members had individual questions:

Q. Shannon: Will the new board positions be limited to Minneapolis residents?

Andrew: No

Q. Anne: The work we do is currently highly valued and I don't see any need to elevate the work through this process. I don't see this as necessary.

Andrew: Council members might have more buy-in when they get to appoint the members.

Anne: Can you give me a tangible buy-in example?

Andrew: No example

Andrew talked about how he learned more about the public health board by being part of the appointment of the board. There is power in that. The board is given more backing by council when they know what is going on.

Maureen: The board doesn't discuss particular dog cases at the board level. Several other members expressed the same sentiment.

Nancy: Are you looking at ward quotas (meaning a certain number of people would have to be appointed from each Ward)?

Andrew: I am completely open to that, but it doesn't have to be the case; we could continue the same appointments made by residents, pet businesses, vet, rescues, etc.

Andrew described that the process could include MACC staff looking at applications and making recommendation of applicants to the council. The city council would make final recommendations.

Deb: What happens if the city council doesn't agree with the MACC recommendation?

A: I haven't seen that happen yet, but I have only been in office for two months. But if we don't get 7 votes, they wouldn't be appointed. Often times, folks who are not appointed by the agency bring their complaint to the city council member. So, in essence, this process will address the "noisy-er" people.

Shannon: How does the appointment process work for other boards?

Andrew: Open board positions are posted online, and people apply online. There is no a lot of nit-picking during the process.

Dan added that MACC will continue to do the same process we use now, but the proposed added step will be forwarding our recommendations to council for their stamp of approval.

Shannon: What if a potential appointee doesn't get appointed? Can the person go directly to a city council member to argue to get on the committee?

Andrew: If the board is set up as it is right now, that wouldn't happen often.

The board decided that they will send a separate email directly to Council member Johnson addressing their position on his new idea.

Before we adjourned, Anne mentioned that Downtown Dog will again be the Community Partner to PRIDE 2014. If anyone wants to be involved in the Doggie Drag contest, please let Anne know. The event is held on June 28 at 3pm.

Jeanette thanked everyone for staying longer to accommodate the extended conversation and adjourned the meeting at 4:35pm.

**Upcoming Meeting:**

June 2, 2014 (2-4pm)

September 8, 2014 (2-4pm)

December 1, 2014 (2-4pm)



## **Adoption Initiative – Focus Groups Scheduled**

Minneapolis Animal Care & Control is looking to the community regarding our new Adoption Initiative and have scheduled the following small group sessions with our stakeholders and interested parties to ask for input and suggestions as we move forward with this new project.

Wednesday, January 8, 6-8pm – Chicken Run Rescue Meeting

Wednesday, January 15, 6-8pm – Minnesota Partnership for Animal Welfare (MNPAW)

Thursday, January 16, 5:30pm – Citizens for Minneapolis Animal Care (CMAC)

Saturday, January 18, 10 to noon – MACC Volunteers

Saturday, January 18, noon to 2pm – MACC Volunteers

Wednesday, January 22, 11 to 1pm – 311 staff

Thursday, January 23, 10 to 11am – Friends of MACC Facebook Administrators

Friday, January 24 – Site Visit to Animal Humane Society

Saturday, January 25, 10:30 to 12:30pm – Adopters

Thursday, January 30, 5:30 to 7:30pm (in the community) – MACC Rescue Groups

Wednesday, February 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Site Visit to Animal Humane Society

Monday, February 10, 7 to 9pm (in the community) – Community Focus Group / Donors

Sunday, February 16, 11am to 1pm – Multiple Animal Permit Holders (chickens)

Tuesday, February 18, 6 to 8pm – Owners of Pit Bulls / Power Breed Dogs

Thursday, February 17, noon – 2pm – MACC Volunteers/Coloplast

Friday, February 28 – MN Herpetological Society Meeting

Sunday, March 2, noon to 2pm – MACC Staff